

## THE AMERICAN WAY

**SUMMARY:** Students will participate in a “town meeting” where they portray various individuals who were involved in the establishment and early development of Lassen Volcanic National Park.

**GOAL:** For students to develop an understanding of how the process of public debate and free speech contribute to the establishment of a national park.

**OBJECTIVES:** Students will be able to (1) name at least two individuals who were instrumental in establishing and developing Lassen Volcanic National Park, (2) describe two reasons why the Park was established, and (3) compare their personal and modern views about land use with historical viewpoints.

**GRADE LEVEL:** Fifth through twelfth

**TIME REQUIRED:** One or two 45-minute periods

**LOCATION:** Classroom

**MATERIALS:** Character Cards, pencils, paper

**SUBJECTS:** History, Social Science, Language Art, Drama

**KEY WORDS:** Establish, Develop, Conservation, Preservation, Debate

**BACKGROUND:** On May 6, 1907 President Theodore R. Roosevelt established Cinder Cone and Lassen Peak National Monuments. Many people had worked hard for this goal, and yet the work was just beginning. Since then, more land was acquired, Lassen Peak erupted, and our country’s 13th national park, Lassen Volcanic, was established on August 9, 1916. As with the establishment of any national park, people had to be convinced of the area’s value.

In this activity, students will portray historical individuals who had an interest in the Lassen area. Although some of these people lived at different times, they all had an effect on the final decision. A brief character description and other pertinent information is found on each Character Card. If time permits, students could research their characters more thoroughly.

This is not a formal debate, but a “town meeting” where each viewpoint is shared. This activity is great fun if each student tries to impersonate his/her character. Give them a few minutes to think about the voice that they might want to use. You might want to make some props available. Each student’s character should state and explain his/her viewpoint. The committee members will make the final decision. The teacher or one of the students can act as judge.

There seemed to be more people for rather than against the formation of Lassen Volcanic National Park. Small groups of people were against it but they were not well organized or represented.

Interesting, detailed, historical information can be found in: Footprints in Time, A History of Lassen Volcanic National Park by Douglas H. Strong, “History Notes” in the reference section or park’s teacher packet, and Eruptions of Lassen Peak by B. F. Loomis which is both interesting and educational and includes personal accounts of the eruptions as well as the remarkable photographs taken by its author.

### **INSTRUCTIONAL SEQUENCE:**

1. Explain that there will be a meeting to discuss the fate of the land and features surrounding Lassen Peak. Some students will receive Character Cards and portray their character’s viewpoints and concerns. Other students will be on the “National Park Committee” and will listen to all the concerns. They then must decide whether to establish a new park called Lassen Volcanic National Park, keep the two small monuments as they are, or have the area revert back to national forest.
2. Pass out the Character Cards. Have the students read the information and decide how they want to portray their character. Remind students that they are representing their character’s viewpoint, not their own.
3. Have the rest of the class, the “National Park Committee,” set up the “meeting hall.” Chairs for the committee should be in a semicircle on one side of the front of the room. Set a podium in front of the committee. Place enough chairs for the waiting characters facing the front.
4. Call the meeting to order. As each character is introduced, he/she comes to the podium and shares concerns and viewpoints. Characters get about two minutes each and should state their name, time they lived in the area, their connection with the area, what their job is, why they think a park should or should not be established, and/or what alternative they support. Remind the students that they will be trying to convince the committee to vote for the alternative of their characters’ choices.
5. After all the views have been represented, the committee should openly discuss all the alternatives and then vote. The alternatives can include, but are not limited to: full national park designation, keep status the same as separate national monuments, or revert back to national forest.
6. After the committee votes, open the discussion up to the whole class. Would any have voted differently? Why or why not?
7. Have each student pick one of the characters and write a paragraph on how that person might have felt about establishing Lassen Volcanic National Park.

### **EXTENSION/ENRICHMENT:**

1. If Lassen Volcanic National Park had not been established in 1916, do you think we would establish it as a national park today? Brainstorm who the interested parties might be. Hold another meeting. Who would be for establishing a park? Who would be against? Why/why not? Who would be at the meeting? Who would be responsible for the final decision? How would you vote? How would your parents? Why?



2. Pick a current local issue such as making Mt. Shasta a national park. Decide which interests should be represented. Hold a meeting. Debate and decide the issue's fate.
3. Read some of the personal experiences in Eruptions of Lassen Peak by B.F. Loomis.
4. Research the characters more thoroughly.

**ASSESSMENT:** Have the students name three people important in the establishment and early development of Lassen Volcanic National Park, list two reasons why the Park was established, and determine how they would have voted at the meeting if they were alive when Lassen Volcanic National Park was being established. Explain why.



## Character Cards

Photocopy for student use.

1. **Louis A Barrett, supervisor of Lassen National Forest from 1905 to 1910.** During this time, Barrett estimated that he walked about 3,500 miles and rode 10,000 miles in the Lassen area. He put into practice the doctrine of multiple use but later reflected that this had helped destroy much of the area's original beauty. He filed a report to the government recommending several points of interest be given national monument status which would protect them from placer and other mining, mineral claims, logging interests, and ranching. Louis Barrett favored national monument over national park status because the "natural curiosities" were small and scattered and the land in between could be used for other purposes. The U.S. Forest Service would retain control instead of handing it over to the Department of Interior.
2. **The ghost of Ishi, representative of the Yahi and Yana tribes who lived in the foothills west of Lassen Peak.** During the hot summers, the Yahi and Yana Native American tribes lived in temporary camps on the cooler slopes of Lassen. Life was not easy even before the settlers came. Their staple food was acorns, supplemented by wild game, roots, berries, seeds, and leafy plants. Their numbers dropped drastically with the coming of settlers due to malaria and other diseases. Settlers moved onto their land and wanted them off of it. Many Indians were hunted down and killed. Some survivors were moved to reservations only to die. Most, if not all, of the Yana were exterminated by the late 1860s. By 1911 the sole survivor of the Yahi, Ishi, was starving and came out to the town of Oroville. Ishi had been hunted by settlers and had watched all of his family and friends die. Ishi shared some of his culture with us before dying of tuberculosis in 1916. He would probably be glad that "Waguanapa" (Lassen Peak) is preserved and held in some respect.
3. **William H. Nobles, artisan and prospector.** He discovered what was probably the easiest trail into California. Nobles sought fame and fortune with his trail but it was not realized during his lifetime. Most emigrants continued to use the more publicized routes farther south. He hoped the trans-continental railroad would go via his route but instead it went over Donner Pass. Part of his trail is preserved in the present day Lassen Volcanic National Park. William Nobles probably would have been pleased to see a national park made that helped commemorate the trail he found.



4. **Joseph Silas Diller, veteran geologist of the U.S. Geological Survey.** He researched the Lassen area for 40 years between 1883 and 1923. Diller realized that Lassen was actually part of the Cascade Range rather than the Sierra Nevada and valued the beauty of this unique geological area. He was instrumental in mapping this area and added greatly to the geological knowledge of the Lassen region. He visited Lassen after eruptions and hiked up Lassen Peak and peered into the smoking new crater. He also viewed the Devastated Area. Diller's Geologic Atlas was often cited to support the park proposal. Joseph Diller supported Dittmar's proposal to establish a park.
5. **Helen Tanner Brodt, first Caucasian woman known to climb to the top of Lassen Peak.** She ascended the peak on August 28, 1864 with her husband, Aurelius Brodt and Major P.B. Reading. They found a crater near the top "sending up vast clouds of sulfurous steam, and making a deafening roar, similar to an immense steam-engine blowing off steam." The newspaper reported that "they had made the trip to Lassen for the purpose of sketching that beautiful mountain." They also found a beautiful small lake, which Mr. Reading named after Helen. She enjoyed the beauty, solitude, and geological wonders of the area.
6. **Major P.B. Reading, rancher, founding father of Shasta County.** He filed a mining claim on what is now Bumpass Hell in 1854 and did other prospecting in the nearby foothills. Reading surveyed Nobles Pass for a possible railroad route, which ended up going through Donner Pass instead. Not much mining was done within the present day park boundaries except at the Sulphur Works, as no large paying deposits of anything were found. Major Reading became the first settler in Shasta County and was a respected citizen. He made many trips to the Lassen area to hike and enjoy its beauty.
7. **Ponderosa Pine Tree.** This tree lived in Lassen for 300 years and has witnessed the coming of settlers. It would like its youngsters to live to a ripe old age and become snags, homes for woodpeckers and other animals to take refuge in. It witnessed logging outside the park boundaries and the accompanying change of scenery and degradation of the environment. This tree was glad that not much logging was done in Lassen due to its general inaccessibility and poor quality of timber. It witnessed the eruptions and watched close friends being blown down in the Devastated Area. This pine tree would like to keep the forest in Lassen intact for the benefit of all wildlife and especially likes small children to walk underneath and look up with admiration.





8. **Mr. Jessen, stockman.** Most of the land now included in the park boundaries was unsuitable for year-round habitation and would not sustain a family. It was good for summer pasture for a few head of cattle. Only about 15 stockmen with 30 to 200 head apiece summered in the area. Jessen's place was destroyed in 1915 by the eruptions and was part of the Devastated Area. When B.F. Loomis saw the Jessen place after the eruption, he said, "The Jessen place was once a fertile meadow, but now it is a waste of land, with not a vestige of buildings or fences to show where the place used to be." Jessen figures the area is a total loss for grazing because of the volcanic activity, but that the land is valuable in other ways.
9. **Benjamin F. Loomis, lumberman, hotel operator, amateur naturalist, and photographer.** He was a long time area resident best known for his incredible photographs of the 1914 to 1917 eruptions of Lassen Peak. Loomis spent lots of time hiking and photographing the Lassen area and wrote numerous newspaper articles about the eruptions, which brought national attention to Lassen. He wrote Eruptions of Lassen Peak and built a stone museum at Manzanita Lake in memory of his only daughter, Mae, who died of influenza. The museum and 40 acres of land were later donated to the National Park Service and included in the Park. B.F. Loomis strongly supported establishment of the Park.
10. **Arthur L. Conard, progressive businessman.** He was an organizer and president of the Lassen Park Development Association. Conard exerted strong leadership in the establishment of Lassen Volcanic National Park and owned 40 acres near Mineral where he spent relaxing summers. He strongly believed that the area was unique and significant as well as beautiful. After the Park was established on August 9, 1916, Arthur Conard promoted interest in the new park by citing its great recreational potential.
11. **Congressman John E. Raker, Representative of the State of California from Susanville for 15 years.** Raker spent part of his childhood near Lassen and vacationed in Drakesbad. He introduced several bills to establish Lassen as a national park. When Lassen Peak erupted, much positive support was generated; his bill was finally successful and was approved by President Wilson in 1916. Congressman Raker continued to be the Park's main spokesperson in Congress until his death in 1926.



12. **Michael E. Dittmar, journalist who started the Redding Record Searchlight, among other papers.** He was interested in Lassen before the eruptions and saw the eruptions as a good way to get support for the Park. Dittmar lobbied on behalf of Redding and Shasta County for the establishment of a national park. He wrote many good descriptions of the scenic beauty of the area and sent in many photos of the eruptions. Michael Dittmar worked on ways to promote interest in the new national park by giving illustrated lectures and worked on the idea of a loop road connecting points of scenic beauty and scientific significance.
13. **Ima Stockman, imaginary stockman.** He grazed cattle in the park boundaries in 1919. Stockman wanted to abolish the Park because grazing brought more revenue than the tourist trade. He thought more people visited the surrounding national forest than the Park and had strong opinions but was outnumbered by people who supported the Park. Ima Stockman wanted the area to be national forest so grazing could be continued.
14. **Milton Supan, son of Dr. Mathias Supan who claimed the Sulphur Works as a mine.** He realized the development value of his property with the loop highway going through it and constructed a lunchroom and gas station. He wanted to continue developing his property for tourists and financial gain. Milton Supan supported the Park but wanted to continue to own his private property within it.
15. **Lance Graham, park visitor.** Graham was born and raised within sight of Lassen Peak. On June 14, 1914 he and two others climbed the peak to look at the newly formed crater. They were at the rim when the eruption began. They ran down as fast as they could but Graham was hit by a flying rock and left for dead. Luckily the rocks and ashes were cool. If they had been hot, all would have been killed. Lance Graham was found alive, and rescued after the eruption was over. He was filled with awe and respect for Lassen Peak!
16. **Atsugewi Tribal Leader.** The Atsugewi (Aht-zsu-GAY-wee) is an Indian tribe that lives northeast of Lassen Peak along Hat Creek and in Hat Creek Valley. The tribe had traditionally used the northwestern portion of the proposed park during summer months for hunting, fishing, and gathering of various plants. For thousands of years this land had provided the tribe with all it needed to survive. The lakes, streams, meadows, and forests had many good memories and important meaning to the tribe. If making this area a national park would result in the land being protected, preserved, and respected by those who would use it, then the Atsugewis would favor making this beautiful place a national park.

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17. **Canada Goose, a regular summer visitor to Manzanita Lake.** He enjoys the quiet, unpolluted lakes in the area surrounding Lassen Peak. This goose builds nests on the shore of many of the lakes and raises his family there. Making Lassen a national park would mean protection from hunting for all the wildlife living in the Park.
  
18. **Forrest Cutterburg, imaginary prospective lumberman.** He thinks there might be some valuable timber in the Lassen area. Forrest Cutterburg thinks that only the peak and Cinder Cone should be managed as national monuments and the rest as national forest. This would allow logging in all other areas not made into a national park.

